

*News From U.S. Senator*

*North Dakota*

# Byron L. Dorgan

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## **DORGAN ANNOUNCES \$815,000 IN TWO RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS FOR NORTH DAKOTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) — Efforts to spur job growth in rural areas in North Dakota will get a big boost from nearly \$1 million in grants U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan announced Friday. Dorgan said the \$815,000 in Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG), awarded to two North Dakota Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) zones and the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, will be used to help create private sector jobs by encouraging technological development in rural North Dakota.

The Southwest REAP Zone and the Center of North America (CONAC) REAP Zone, which Dorgan helped create to encourage economic development in the state, will receive \$615,000 to purchase video-conferencing and computer lab equipment and to develop a strategic plan for deploying new technology in the zones. The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives will receive \$200,000 to help develop e-commerce initiatives in rural North Dakota.

"These are important grants," said Dorgan, who helped secure funds for the grants as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. "Technology development holds a lot of promise for the future, and these grants target that effort. New technologies are creating economic growth throughout the country. These funds ensure that North Dakota is able to pursue those opportunities vigorously, and is able to do so in a way that creates jobs in rural areas where the quality of life is high but job opportunities are often lacking. This could be a big part of the answer to stemming our state's out-migration problem."

The Southwest REAP Zone contains the eight counties of Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Slope and Stark, and the Three Affiliated Tribes. The CONAC REAP Zone contains the six counties of Benson, Bottineau, McHenry, Pierce, Rolette and Towner, and the two Indian Reservations of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa and the Spirit Lake Sioux Nation.

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